

EDITOR'S MISCELLANY



CONSUMPTION.—Let us suppose a man who has contracted consumption cannot go away from home, what can be done for him?

If his occupation is an unhealthy one, or if his work is in unhealthy surroundings, he should secure other employment, preferably outside. If he handles foodstuffs, as butcher or baker or cook, for instance; or if he handles certain articles of use and wear, as cigar-maker or clothing-maker, for example, he should make a change in his work, because he is liable to contaminate the food or the goods on which he works.

In his home the keynote of his care will be cleanliness. He must exercise cleanliness as to his clothing, his bed-clothing, and his handkerchiefs; all these must be washed apart from the family linen and purified by boiling. His hands, face, and beard must be kept clean. He must have separate dishes and table furnishings, and these must be washed in boiling water by themselves. Dust in the room must not be stirred up with a broom, but taken up with a moistened cloth. Above all else, the consumptive must expectorate only into a mug or spittoon containing a little water. The germs do not travel in a moist state, but are readily transferred when dried out and formed into dust. Small spit-cups, waterproof paper receptacles or paper napkins, may be used; but in any event all matter from the lungs must be thrown into the drain-pipe; or, better still, burned. The spittoon or other vessel should be kept covered in warm weather; flies may walk over the sputum and afterwards alight on articles of food, thus spreading the germs. Not only must provision be made for cough accompanied by expectoration, but a handkerchief, rag, or paper napkin must be held before the face during the so-called dry cough; otherwise the particles of germ-laden moisture will be sprayed forth on to clothing, bedding, and carpet.

Our patient's diet must consist of plain and nutritious food, well cooked and attractively served. The best manner of feeding is to prepare moderate quantities of easily digested food, and give it rather oftener than the usual three times per day. A well-fed patient frequently increases in weight, and increase in weight usually means an increase in the body's power of resistance to progress of the disease; and it may be regarded in a general way as the index of improvement.

The consumptive must carefully regulate his mode of life; he may

seek diversion, but must not indulge in dissipation. Alcohol and tobacco are bad for him. Places where the air is dry and dusty and smoky are to be shunned; undue exertion and immoderate exercise are to be avoided. In pleasant weather, if he can stay out-of-doors, at the sea-shore, in the parks or in some sheltered nook at home, he should do so. Not only should he breathe fresh air in the daytime, but by night also. It is best for him to have a separate room and bed. The windows of his room should be open throughout the night, and his bed be protected from draughts.

Knowing that consumption is communicable and chiefly acquired by breathing in the germs, we say to the consumptive, first, last, and all the time, do not spit carelessly in public or in private, in-doors or out-of-doors. Find some means to take care of the sputum; cheap and convenient forms of glass, metal, and pasteboard pocket spit-cups can be purchased at many drug-stores for use away from home.

This is the sum and substance of the prevention of the spread of consumption. Being obedient to this simple rule of cleanliness, "the consumptive is himself almost harmless, and he only becomes harmful through bad habits."

Finally, there is no danger in living with a consumptive, provided he will be clean in his habits.

Consumption is familiar to everyone. The doctors call it "tuberculosis of the lungs." The disease is widespread, but chiefly found in centres of population—in the cities.

Formerly it was thought that the disease was hereditary—"in the blood," as the saying goes. It was believed that any child of a consumptive father or mother was almost sure to develop tuberculosis of the lungs later in life. That is not so. Such a child may start out with a poor stock of vitality and with a lessened amount of resistance, but never with seeds of the disease in the system. Brought up under favorable conditions and with proper oversight, a child born of consumptive parents may pass through life in the enjoyment of fair good health.

In fact, the old-time mystery about consumption has been swept away. We now know three things: First, the disease is *communicable*; that is to say, it is communicated from person to person, although it is not contagious in the sense that measles or scarlet fever or smallpox may become epidemic; second, it is *preventable* to a large extent by the exercise of reasonable care and the observance of a few simple precautions; and, third, it is *curable* in the majority of cases if treated in time—completely and lastingly curable.—*Extracts from leaflet by ADDISON W. BAIRD, M.D., New York.*

MRS. FRAKE, president of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, said to the nurses of Illinois that they might be sure of the support of all the women's clubs of the State in their endeavor to secure legislation, and advised them first to be sure as to what they want. Better to be very sure and slow, than hasty and uncertain as to all that is desired. The speaker laid great stress upon the need of the nurses being well versed in the salient points of the bill, then, being sure of the same, not to hesitate in the work of educating all those with whom they come in contact as to the features of the same. "Do not think," said Mrs. Frake, "because you have once broached the subject to a friend, that he necessarily is perfectly clear on all points; someone else may have made assertions, not having been clearly informed, which again puts your friend in doubt as to the need and fairness of your measure. Talk the bill, and talk it intelligently; furthermore, if you want its passage, don't be afraid of talking too much. You have the public to educate."

MEDICAL INSPECTION IN BALTIMORE.—The Maryland State Society of Nurses chose a happy moment in which to bring before the public of Baltimore the question of the medical inspection of schools. The interest in this subject has been steadily growing during the past two years, and it culminated in a petition presented by the Federation of Women's Clubs to the School Board at the very date of the society's meeting. Dr. Darlington's excellent address on the subject of "Medical Inspection of Schools and the School Nurse" could not have come at a better time. The School Board and the Health Department agreed as to the desirability of establishing such a service, and asked for appropriations to make a trial with one or two physicians and a trained nurse, the experiment beginning on February 1.

SUDDEN DEATH IN DIPHTHERIA.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* in a paragraph from *Medicinskoe Obozryenie*, Moscow, says: "Krasnoff's experimental researches have resulted in a confirmation of his belief that sudden death in diphtheria is due to paralysis of the diaphragm."

RADIOGRAPHY OF FŒTUS IN UTERO.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* says: "Albers-Schonberg has succeeded in obtaining good radioscopic views of the fœtus at eight months in two cases. He accomplishes this by using a special diaphragm which exerts light compression on the abdomen and prevents change of position by the fœtus."